

# THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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# Holiday on the Campus

GEORGE L. WARNER

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 6*

1127<sup>20</sup>

MY LANDLADY MADE A FINE THANKSGIVING DINNER but I left, almost impolitely, after I had finished. Her family was there and I felt uneasy. I was really a stranger and Thanksgiving should be a family gathering.

The library seemed like a good place to spend the afternoon. I would feel comfortable there and I couldn't study with all the company in the house. I slipped on my jacket and opened the back door. The sun shone brightly but a north wind blew very hard. As I closed the door it chilled me through.

I walked down the alley dodging the muddy puddles that had frozen over the night before. Turning onto the sidewalk I was hurried along by a gust of wind which sent the dead leaves racing along the curb.

Few people were on the street. Occasionally I would pass a house with several cars parked in front. Glancing into the window I would see a family laughing and talking and enjoying the holiday. I guessed that these must be reunions.

As I neared the library I passed an Oriental standing by a scraggly hedge. I wondered why he was standing in the open as he was. It was much too cold merely to be taking a walk. He didn't seem to notice me when I passed him, but after I had gone a few steps farther I looked around and he was watching me. I don't know why people do that. They always seem to be watching you when you turn around. Maybe they wonder too.

I hurried up the library steps but I could see the steel lock in the crack between the tall doors. Odd, I thought; surely everyone doesn't go home for the holidays. I turned and walked slowly down the steps, then towards the quadrangle.

The brick buildings seemed colder and more unfriendly than they had the day before. There was no one on the broadwalk. The stiff wind rattled the dead limbs in the tops of the elms and pushed a weathervane back and forth, its rusted shaft squeaking as it moved. A rope on an empty flagpole slapped against the steel spire, beating metallic notes from its core.

My ears were stinging. I blew into my hands and cupped the palms over my ears but it didn't help. I pulled my collar up. It was too short. I shoved my hands back into my pockets and leaned into the icy wind.

It was much more comfortable as I stepped into the hall of the Union. I saw no one but the boy in the check room. From the lounge, though, I heard a piano. Upon walking into the lounge I found it empty except for a lone figure hunched over the keyboard. He was completely engrossed in his pleasure and failed to notice me at first. He played until he sensed my presence, then stopped

suddenly and turned to me. He got up and began to leave, but I asked him to continue. He said he didn't often play for an audience. I assured him that I was enjoying the music. I asked him to play "Clair de Lune." He began to play, timidly at first, but soon his timidity was forgotten. He played many things for me. There seemed to be nothing with which he was not familiar. When he was through I thanked him and told him that I envied his talent. As I left he thanked me also. This seemed strange at first.

I stepped outside. It was warmer than before.

## The Bataan Death March

LYALL E. DILLON

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 6*

ELEVEN YEARS AGO THIS APRIL 9TH, GENERAL WAINWRIGHT tendered his terms of surrender to the Tiger of Malaya, Commanding General of the Japanese Fighting Forces of the Philippines. His terms were ignored. Unconditional surrender of all the beleaguered American and Filipino troops of Bataan was the Tiger's answer.

We had fought one of the most concentrated, hardest, most devastating battles of the war. Hannibal's retreating army and the rigors of their retreat have been vividly recorded in history. The rout of Germany's army at Stalin-grad has been exceptionally well recorded by Sergeant Knotke. No one has yet recorded a description of the surrender and march of General MacArthur's men of Bataan. No one who saw it has been able to tell it. The story is so deep, so livid, so many-faceted.

I saw it. I saw the physical and mental torment. I will let you be the judge. The story can twist the heart or turn the stomach, depending upon your interpretation of the utter devastation, degradation and desolation of this marching line of twenty thousand men—defeated men.

Rob a man of his arms, his right to fight. Take away his meager pack with its pitiful store of quinine and cigarettes. Take away all the doubtful comforts of battle; add to this the danger of losing his life to a sloppy bayonet thrust or to a zealous Japanese reserve replacement eager to bloody his sword. This is how we of the "Death March" began.

Now march these men all day and all night. When a contingent of horse-drawn field or foot soldiers of the invading force comes by, set them in a rice paddy in the broiling sun. Take away their water for five days. The only available water is from a steaming rain and they drink from a puddle in the road. Take away all food for five days. Let them fight to the death for a ragged stalk of sugar cane. Let them get diarrhea or dysentery and suffer it until the anus



turns inside out and maggots infest their guts, gleaning the decay and filth. Let malaria run rampant. Drive them. Prod them. Keep them on the move until the eye-balls shrivel and turn black and red. Until the lips turn back in the wolf-like grin of death. Let the tongue turn black and protrude to accentuate the death grin in a grossly swollen exclamation point. When they have degenerated to the point where they no longer deserve an honorable death, push them into a shallow ditch and bury them alive before the red-eyed cadavers who were their buddies. Never let them forget they have been conquered. Make them bow and scrape. Humiliate them. Do each of these and then multiply what has been done by ten thousand.

Then, perhaps, you'll understand the death march of Bataan.

## A Person I Will Never Forget

KENNETH WAYNE ELLIS

*Rhetoric 100, Final Examination*

A PERSON MEETS MANY PEOPLE IN HIS LIFETIME, BUT there is always one person, one personality that sticks in his memory. This person is perhaps not always outstanding in social or literary works. He may not be wealthy and famous and you probably won't be able to explain why you remember this person so vividly. I shall write here of a person I shall never forget, Axel Swanson, an old Swedish fisherman.

In July of 1944 my parents and I made our annual trip to my father's hunting lodge in northern Michigan. I recall it was very hot and I swam nearly every day in the waters of Lake Superior. Each day a small man in a weather-beaten boat would drift to a stop at a decayed and tumble-down dock. The small man would haul his frail nets from the boat and hang them to dry. Then he would pull his boat onto the shore and start to clean and salt his daily catch of fish.

One morning I went with my father to buy some of Axel's salted fish. As I have said, Axel was a small man. His face was deeply lined by worry and the never ceasing winds of Lake Superior. His dark, blue eyes moved incessantly and seemed to catch every movement and every object around him. His thin, blond hair flew in every direction when he removed his cap. Axel talked with the characteristic Swedish accent. He had been born in the old country and had come to America with his brothers. All he had ever known was fishing. His hands showed the trade marks. They were small hands, but tough and calloused, and a rope burn appeared here and there. They were expressive hands, and Axel used them freely when he talked, always measuring how long a fish was or how high the waves were.

Axel was a quiet man. But when he did talk he was very interesting. Axel knew the fish, the weather, the boats, the nets and all about fishing. Axel was not an educated man as we would say. He could hardly write his name; he never knew what made the Roman empire fall; he was never inside a high school building; he had never heard of a fraternity. In many ways he was much wiser than educated men. With Axel there was no pretence. He spoke only of what he knew was certain; he listened much and spoke little. He always spoke of what he knew to be right and there were no hidden feelings with Axel. When he was mad you could be sure he would let you know about it; when he was happy he would let you know about that too. Axel lived a life of simplicity and he lived alone.

Each morning at daybreak he would get in the same boat, start the same motor, follow the same course and use the same nets. When he returned in the evening he would sit on the same block of wood and clean his catch, which was never large, just enough to supply his needs. Axel never took more than he needed; there was no greed in him.

This I remember about Axel Swanson. He was not an outstanding person; in fact, many people disregarded him entirely. To me he was a friend; he was adventure; and he was wisdom.

## Well, That's What Counts!

JAMES R. MILLS

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 6*

**A**N ITEM APPEARING RECENTLY IN ONE OF THE LOCAL newspapers reported that the special agents of the Illinois Central Railroad are determined to find the culprit who stole an adding machine from the dining car of one of the trains.

I don't like to condone a thief, but if any thief ever should be condoned, I think this is the one. It's been many years since we've had a good, old-fashioned train robbery; and at last some modern Jesse James has taken the matter into his own hands, so to speak, and robbed a train of its adding machine. I like to think that he might even have had the same laudable motive (robbing the rich to give to the poor) that his legendary counterpart had. I can't imagine what the poor would want with an adding machine, but if, for some reason, they did want it, I can't think of a more appropriate group to steal it from than that ruthless band of shortchangers that inhabit the dining car of a train. The pirates that lurk there in the guise of waiters, hiding their wicked hearts under spotless, white waistcoats, have been robbing helpless passengers for years. If you ever sat down to eat a hamburger dinner in such a dining car



and then received a check which would have seemed too expensive even for a sirloin steak, you'll know what I mean. If you have had this experience, you probably paid the check, as I always did, and you also left a tip, unless you wanted to risk being served cyanide with your next cup of coffee.

I am glad that at last some noble individual has mustered up the courage to walk right into this den of dignified thieves and to slip off with their adding machine. I smile to think of the confusion that will result each evening when the waiters start to add up their daily "take" by hand. They're likely to be adding all night.

You are probably wondering why this crusading thief should have taken an adding machine rather than something of real value, the cash register, perhaps, or a platter of T-bone steaks. Well, when you stop to think about it, why shouldn't he have taken an adding machine? After all, you can't deny that in this modern age that's the thing that counts.

## Old Age Security-Perhaps

VAUGHN R. PENNINGTON

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 10*

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS CONFRONT-  
ing the present national administration, and a problem which confronted the last two administrations, is economic security. This problem is so important that a new cabinet post for Health, Education and Welfare has been created.

The phase of economic security worrying most people is old age. As the working man or woman advances in age he or she begins to think of the future. The most important question that he asks himself is, "Will I have enough money to live on comfortably when my working days are over?" Probably half of the presently employed individuals in the United States would answer this question in the negative. At the present time the Federal Insurance Contribution Act provides a maximum benefit of eighty-five dollars per month, at age sixty-five, to a person covered by the Act. How can a person maintain a fair standard of living for himself and family on eighty-five dollars a month?

There is really a simple solution for providing security for the aged and at the same time providing a fuller education for the young. The plan is based on the division of all individuals into three age groups. The first group would consist of all persons who are under the age of twenty-five; the second group all persons between the ages of twenty-five and sixty; and the third group all persons over the age of sixty. Actually the most important of these three groups

would be the second group. This second group would be the producers in the economic structure.

The individuals in the first group would produce nothing, for they would be permitted to study until they were twenty-five. The members of the third group would be required to produce nothing of economic value, as their working days would end at sixty. Both the first and third groups would be supported by the members of the second group.

Certain rules would have to be established for the second group which would place everyone on an equal basis. The first rule would be that no one could earn over four hundred dollars in any one month. If a person did earn over this fixed amount the excess would be paid into the National Treasury in the form of a tax. If a person did not earn four hundred dollars in any one month he would be paid the difference between his earnings and the guaranteed amount. This payment would be made by the National Treasury in the form of a subsidy.

Some critics of the Federal Government may think that this form of equalization has taken place in the past two decades. Actually the Federal Income Tax has never been one hundred per cent of all earnings over a fixed amount as would be the case under this plan. The subsidies paid have never been paid to all wage earners but have been paid to various groups. The largest group receiving subsidy payments is the farmers. Prices of many farm commodities are being supported, and in the past direct subsidies were paid to farmers for not planting their full acreage.

Of course there would be very little incentive for anyone to try to earn any amount over the four hundred dollars, knowing that the additional amount must be paid in taxes. This would be quite a relief to a highly paid entertainer such as Arthur Godfrey. Mr. Godfrey could really relax and enjoy his farm in Virginia as he certainly could earn the maximum amount permitted by doing only one show a week in place of the many he is now doing. Perhaps one show a week by Arthur would be enjoyed more by his listeners, and the dropping of his other programs would provide more open time on the CBS network for educational programs. The problem of Charles E. Wilson's qualification to head the Defense Department would never have become an issue under this plan. Mr. Wilson would not have been able to accumulate two and one-half million dollars' worth of General Motors Company stock and would have been spared the worry of deciding to dispose of the stock. Neither Godfrey nor Wilson would have been trying to earn anything over the guaranteed amount, as they both would know that they would be taken care of in their old age.

A question prominent in the 1952 election was, "Is it ethical for private business to pay a government employee the difference between the amount the government pays the person and what he could earn in private business?" One of the political parties thought it was not ethical to make such payments. The then Governor of the State of Illinois thought it was ethical that such pay-



ments be made to attract better men into government service. No such payments would have to be considered under a plan providing a fixed amount that could be retained by the individual. Elimination of some of the name-calling in future political campaigns certainly would be a big improvement.

Advertising would hardly be required if no incentive existed for increasing profits. With no advertising budgets we would find many changes in our entertainment. If *Life* magazine could not have secured the ads to pay its publication costs it would not have been able to purchase the publication rights to Winston Churchill's *Memoirs*. If the reading public could not have read the condensed version of such a book they might have read the complete book. Without advertising it would no longer be necessary for people watching a television program to get up and leave the room when the commercials come on the air. In fact without advertising the hucksters would have to go out and look for a job where they could create something of value; they would not be able to sit and create ideas "strictly off the top of the head."

Under such a system of fixed income there would be no more quarrels between labor and management. Labor would know that it could only earn the fixed amount; management would know that if labor was not paid the fixed amount the government would pay the difference. In a very short time there would be no cry from labor for higher wages. Labor would devote its time at the bargaining table to issues involving its welfare. Certainly everyone would gain in the end, as the working man would be happier with his working conditions and perhaps produce more; management would be happier if production increased and might be inclined to grant more concessions when bargaining. There would be few arguments over the Taft-Hartley Law, and the National Labor Relations Board would be reduced to deciding cases concerning health. It certainly would be simpler to decide if an employer was putting enough vegetables in the vegetable soup than it would be to decide if the employer was putting enough money in the pay checks of the employees.

Of course at the beginning of any plan such as this there would be some inequalities that would have to be adjusted. One of these inequalities that would be adjusted would be the personal wealth of each individual. This would be worked out by raising the Inheritance Tax and Gift Tax rates to one hundred per cent. This would not be a very large raise from the present rates of these taxes. It would only take one generation to place everyone on the same standard of personal wealth. With this accomplished there would be no worry about "keeping up with the Joneses," for the Joneses would be no wealthier than anyone else. A tax that would not permit the transfer of wealth to another person in the family would have simplified Henry Ford's problem of disposing of his wealth, and it would have made the Ford Foundation unnecessary.

Of course there are many other minor problems that would have to be worked out, but the big problem of providing a livable income for all would be taken care of by this plan. Actually the plan is so simple that it is hard to

understand why it has never been tried before. Many of the plans advanced in the last twenty years have used some parts of this idea, but not the whole idea. Wouldn't it be simple to live in an economy such as this economy would be? There would be no financial problems, past, present or future. The young would study; the aged would relax; the producers would produce, but only four hundred dollars' worth.

\* \* \*

There is a ravine behind our house, lush with the green confusion of wild grapevines and purple panicles of pokeberries. Elderberry bushes, sumac, and sassafras made an awning over the secret tunnels we had hollowed out in the underbrush. There were cockleburrs, too, and seven-foot "horse-weeds" that made us itch when we brushed against them. Little animals sometimes scurried down the paths ahead of us, and I can remember, once, crawling on my hands and knees and coming face to face with a very stern bunny. There was always adventure in our gully, but sometimes we had to make it ourselves.

At the far end of the ravine is a twelve-foot high culvert with a steady stream of water running from it. On wash days the water was milky white; but on other days it was clear, and even tasted pretty good. At the top of the culvert a giant elm tree stretched its branches out over the water. Somebody, at one time or another, had fastened a steel cable to the largest branch, and some of the older boys used it as a swing.

This was no game for six-year-olds. We could only look in admiration at the Black Pirates, who could swing twenty-five feet up over the gully, and wish for the day when we would be fifth-graders, too.

One day I was standing on the ridge of the gully with the grip-end of the cable in my hand, wishing I had the nerve to shove my feet hard and jump out into space. Then it happened! Jim shoved me!

I bit my lip as I felt the ground fall away under my feet. My hands clutched the grip until my knuckles turned white. The stream leapt at me; the rocks jumped up. I screamed into the rush of the wind. My guts hit the back of my stomach as I was whipped into the upswing. Branches clawed at me as I was flung at them. Something grabbed my shoulder and spun me around. The cable jolted, and the grip came loose. My hands slipped from the wire. For one suspended moment I saw the water and rocks shooting toward me again. A biting pain stabbed up from my groin. I shrieked and hit.

The last things I remembered were Jim's wail from the top of the culvert, and the stern bunny looking from the undergrowth in surprise.

JOHN LECKEL, 101



# Chicago

STEWART A. YOUNG

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 6*

SINCE CHICAGO IS MY FAVORITE CITY, I FEEL INCLINED to defend her from the vituperative criticisms of Mr. Charles Sisk in his recent contribution to *The Green Caldron*. Mr. Sisk appears to have seen only the seamier side of life in that metropolis by the lake, and to have overlooked entirely the characteristics that constitute her true greatness.

Chicago grew up as an answer to the needs of the rapidly growing Middle West. There had to be good stores so that people could eat, be clothed and have shelter. The need for transportation partly to bring in necessities and partly to carry the produce of her area to distant parts of the country caused Chicago to become the leading railroad center of the United States, and a great shipping center as well. At first Chicago was purely a functional city, supplying the people of the Great Lakes Basin, the upper Mississippi Valley and a vast hinterland with the necessities of life.

The Chicagoans had little time in those early years for cultural and educational activities. Instead, they developed great industries whose products not only supplied the Central States but were shipped by rail and boat to far places. The stockyards are neither romantic nor beautiful; they are indispensably useful. When a Chicagoan smells the breeze from the south he should not complain; he should be proud. The stockyards are one of the great contributions that Chicago makes to the country as a whole.

In more recent years Chicago has had time for cultural and educational activities. Theodore Thomas, a truly great musician, founded a wonderful orchestra which was named for him. As the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, it is still furnishing the best music to the people of the city. Rockefeller gave money to build the University of Chicago, which for many years has been one of the leading educational institutions of the country. These were two of the many early indications of the city's cultural coming of age.

The symphony orchestra is not the only type of musical entertainment to be had in Chicago. Every fall and spring one can hear many of the best singers from the Metropolitan Opera Company. The best musical comedies come to Chicago, too, often while they are still successfully playing on Broadway. "South Pacific," "Oklahoma," "Guys and Dolls" are examples of these.

One of the finest stories of progress in Chicago throughout the last half century has been the history of Grant Park. It used to be a narrow strip of grass between the hideous, smoke-belching Illinois Central and the lake. Through years of effort a great deal of made land has been built out into the lake, widening the park considerably. At the same time the Illinois Central

tracks were electrified, the tracks sunken, and fine bridges built across them. The park has been made a place of beauty by the planting of countless graceful shade trees and masses of shrubbery. One of the crowning features of loveliness is the fabulous Buckingham Fountain, rainbow-swept and sparkling with myriad diamonds. Gradually a wonderful collection of institutions has grown up about Grant Park. The Art Institute, the oldest of these, has been providing the populace with marvelous exhibits both of classical and more modern works of art for three-quarters of a century or more. Then there is the Field Museum which brings from the four corners of the world scientific and cultural treasures to delight the eye and stimulate the mind.

The Shedd Aquarium and the Adler Planetarium—the first of its kind in this country—are two newer additions to the buildings around the park. Still more recent is the provision for “music under the stars” where vast throngs gather on summer nights to hear excellent concerts.

And speaking of music, a very unique privilege is offered to the people of Chicago and its environs during the summer months at Ravinia Park on the north side. Here, beside Lake Michigan, with the moonlight streaming through the trees, can be heard the finest of classical music presented by great artists from various parts of the country.

On the south shore, in beautiful Jackson Park, is another cultural institution. The Museum of Science and Industry contains a fascinating collection of the sort of things its name implies. In the same park is a very beautiful lagoon and a nice stretch of beach where people can relax in the cool lake breezes. There are many other choice parks throughout the city. Garfield should be especially mentioned because of its famous flower exhibits. At the Brookfield Zoo children and adults alike are thrilled by the rare collections of animals which appear to be in the open with no barriers between them and the interested visitors.

One could go on indefinitely, mentioning the Crerar and Newberry libraries, the three great medical centers, the innumerable educational institutions, the breath-taking speedboat rides in summer from which you come back happily drenched with cool spray. The longer one lives in Chicago the more he finds to enjoy and to admire about her.

One can't help but wonder what Mr. Sisk was doing in the sordid section of Clark Street which he describes and why he chooses to breathe the “foul-odored breaths” on the “congested Clark streetcars,” instead of filling his lungs with the refreshing breezes that blow across Michigan Avenue, enjoying a stimulating afternoon in a museum or gaining inspiration out of the view over the lake from the top of the Tribune Tower.

In any city one finds what he is looking for. Some people prefer the University of Chicago to Clark Street.



# Boarding Operation

ALLAN P. CHARAK

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 7*

THE ENGINE COUGHED ONCE OR TWICE, CAUGHT, AND our high-powered, armored launch, running lights blacked out, moved into the stream, slowly, quietly, leaving only a watery whisper behind her. I made a final check of my pistol, slammed a slug into the chamber, and locked the safety catch.

The pitch blackness of the Verde Strait was broken only by the greyish expanse of the clouded sky, and it was against this panel of greyness that we strained our eyes, searching for the silhouette of the *S. S. Malay Prince*. It was about two in the morning when we finally spotted her, looming black on the horizon, without a single light on board to further betray her existence in the narrow channel. There she was, loaded, we knew, right down to her salt water Plimsoll line, with hot cargo—war materials bound for the Communist China coast. This was it, and we began to make our play.

Revvng up our engine slightly, we ran through a series of maneuvers which, in a matter of minutes, brought us about two hundred yards off the star-board beam of the *Malay Prince*. She was under steam, turning over at a minimum speed, feeling her way out of the Strait toward the China Sea. Captain Hernandez, the young but capable Philippine Army officer in charge of the commando team of thirty carefully picked Filipino soldiers on board our launch, moved quietly about the deck, issuing last-minute orders. We had spread out along the port rail, keeping low behind the waist-level steel plates welded to the gunwales. Except for an occasional, partially subdued nervous cough from one or another of the men, no other sounds of life could be heard. The pounding of my heart seemed to pace the throbbing of our engine, telegraphed through the steel deck under my feet. Despite the tropical dampness of the night, my mouth felt as if it had been freshly swabbed with huge wads of rough cotton. I waited, tense, every nerve in my body strained. I reached down to my holster, gripping the butt of my pistol and fighting back an urge to draw and fire, to fire at nothing, or at anything, just to find a release from the terrible tension of anticipation. I was certain that I would buckle under the pressure when I heard the signal, a shrill, brassy whistle blast by Hernandez, and whatever new thoughts or apprehensions were building up in my mind at that moment were scattered by the reality of the action that broke out around me.

Our two searchlights, fore and aft, together poked their probing fingers of light into the blackness around the *Malay Prince*, pinning her down as if she were a huge water-bug. They remained fixed only momentarily, and then moved in slow, traversing arcs, criss-crossing from time to time as they

ranged across the bridge and decks of the ship. I saw that her boarding ladder was down, the platform a scant few feet above the water's edge. Our signalman had his blinker going, flashing out a dot-dash "stop" message in the direction of the vessel, and ordering her deck and running lights on. Hernandez shouted an order, and the urgency of our instructions was punctuated by our forecastle machinegun which laid a string of .50 caliber tracers along the *Malay Prince's* hull, just above the water line, the echo of each hit bouncing back at us between muzzle blasts. Our lights picked out a number of men on her deck, some racing for cover, and others, standing singly or in huddled groups, apparently uncertain of what action to take. One by one the ship's lights blinked on, and her wake subsided. A chain rattled through a chock as her anchor splashed heavily into the water at her bow. Our orders were being complied with.

Blasting our engine full ahead, we heeled hard to starboard, turning a tight, complete circle, bringing the launch up against the broadside of the *Malay Prince*, abreast of her ladder. The moment we scraped the platform, several of our men spilled over the side, dragging lines behind them which they made fast to the platform stanchions. I became conscious of the press of soldiers, all eager to get on with the boarding operation. I was pushed and jostled as I kept moving forward as quickly as I could, anxious to keep a gap from opening in front of me. Finally, I was on the deck of the *Malay Prince*, my pistol in my hand, trying to orient myself. I saw Hernandez, halfway up the companion ladder to the bridge, taking the steps two at a time, four of his men single-filing it up behind him. In the dim light of the deck lamps, I could see groups of soldiers entering into the deep shadows around the deck housings and hatchways, and still others, on their own, spacing themselves out along the rails, carbines in a ready position. There were shouts from various quarters of the ship as crew members were ordered to the deck. They straggled up from below and out of obscure corners, hands held high as they submitted to quick searches and then allowed themselves to be herded to the number three hatch cover, midships. Every now and then a flashlight beam would disappear into the darkness of one of the many passageways; another shout, and another sailor would appear, to be prodded toward the hatch lid to join his shipmates.

Mounting to the bridge, looking for Hernandez, I found him in the wheelhouse, questioning the ship's Captain, a mate, and a helmsman. The Captain, a sweating, pot-bellied, round-faced Filipino, seemed on the verge of tears as he pleadingly demanded to know why his ship had been stopped. His hands gestured aimlessly as he unconvincingly attempted to describe himself, his officers, and his crew as honest seamen, who were carrying nothing more dangerous on board the ship than a load of scrap iron. He kept calling on the mate, also a Filipino, to verify his statements, but the mate, too concerned with his own troubles, only shrugged his shoulders slightly and said nothing.

Taking the Captain to his quarters, Hernandez and I made a thorough search through all of the ship's papers. Her log showed her to be of Philip-



uine registry, owned by a Chinese importing firm, and licensed for the foreign trade. Her manifests seemed to be in order, indicating a cargo of scrap metals for Singapore. The Captain seemed to have regained some degree of composure, but continued to refer to his honesty and lack of responsibility for any irregularities which might be found; but any new-found reassurances he may have experienced went down the drain when Hernandez discovered a small safe under the Captain's bunk. At first he denied knowing the combination, but a few persuasive terms and gestures from Hernandez changed his mind. Kneeling before the safe, his hands unsteady, he spun the dial, and new bursts of perspiration popped out on his face as the door came open. The whole story was in the box: a letter to a Chinese in Amoy, directing the pay-off to the Captain, and a complete inventory of the cargo of the *Malay Prince*. Every piece of her illegal cargo was listed: aircraft engines and parts, landing gear assemblies, instruments, tires, and all the rest.

The Captain blinked several times, then he, too, shrugged his shoulders and said nothing.

## She Just Didn't Feel Like Talking Then

STUART LANGDON

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 9*

THE INSTRUCTOR ASKED HER TO GO TO THE FRONT OF the group and tell about something she had done during the week. Her heart started to pound as she stood up, and she felt very big but very insignificant standing in the center of the semi-circle of students. She stood slightly hunched, pushed together by her feelings. She was unable to hold her stomach in and it seemed to bulge out about as far as her breasts. If she tried to pull it in, it would mean that she would have to stand up straight, throw her shoulders back and lift up her head. But her feelings of insecurity and uneasiness about making a talk when she didn't feel like it made that impossible.

She drew in a breath, too big a breath, and not knowing what to say, said, "Well . . .," in a high, thin voice. Then she thought of an amusing incident and again drew in too much air. But her fear of speaking and resentment at the instructor for asking her to give a talk closed her vocal chords and refused to let her speak. In an effort to break the block, she pushed harder on her locked speaking apparatus. The resulting tension in her throat and mouth pulled her head farther forward and downward, pushed her chest in and her

shoulders forward. Her eyes squeezed themselves shut. The stutter block, running its familiar course, broke spasmodically and her mouth flew shut and open again making a slight plopping sound. Her eyes blinked and her head jerked up and down in synchronism with her moving mouth.

She managed to tell her story a few words at a time. After her narrative she smiled and said, quite fluently, a sentence or two about her reactions to the situation she had described.

The instructor asked, "Now, that wasn't bad, was it?"

"It was terrible," the girl said rather weakly, sounding as though she was about to break into tears. However, she was smiling slightly.

After class she confided rather brightly that she just hadn't felt like talking then, but we knew what she meant.

## The Birth of Two Nations

CORINNE TRAVIS

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 9*

IN MAY, 1948, THE STATE OF ISRAEL MADE ITS DEBUT. THE first ordeal of its infancy was protecting itself from the Arabs who were attacking its borders. Observers, watching the Israeli army defend itself against the strong Arab Legion and the Egyptian army, were surprised to see the new State win its battles. They were even more surprised when they examined the components of the ragged army. The troops were the survivors of Hitler's hells, Yemenite rug weavers, and European ex-bankers. From all corners of the earth they came.

But this was not the first time that history had recorded such events. The spirit of Israel had been seen in the spirit of the thirteen colonies of America. The combination of the Boston merchant, the Virginia planter, and the New Hampshire farmer against the powerful country of England also had shocked contemporary observers. But an independent spirit and the desire to say at the end of the day's labor, "These are the fruits of my vineyard and orchard," typify the pioneer ideal of both the United States and Israel.

The memories of pogroms, the Gestapo, and the N.K.V.D. were forgotten in the sweat and sand of Israel. There was no longer any need to fear a knock at the door, or a uniform. The salty barren land of Palestine was as great a challenge as the dense forests and savage Indians of the New World. In Israel, as in America, though, the conquered land soon became an ally. The Negev desert of Israel is yielding valuable oil and minerals. The carefully irrigated and cultivated hills of Judea are providing sweet oranges, dates, and grapes,



just as the forests had provided the life-giving maize, pumpkins, and turkeys, which kept the early American colonists alive.

Today, the people of the world are watching this little outpost of democracy. They are patiently awaiting the results of another experiment in freedom. Again, as in 1775, the world is seeing a tiny country do the impossible. If Israel can conquer her problems of Arab refugees, the growing tide of immigration, and the unyielding desert, she may prosper and take her place in the concert of democratic nations.

Israel and the United States are melting pots, and the flame which blends the ingredients is the flame of freedom and democracy. And it will be the people who shall cause the deserts and fields to "bloom as the Rose of Sharon."

## The Dance

JOHN T. HENRY

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 13*

IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT. I STOOD THERE IN FRONT of her house, impressing the beauty of everything on my mind. Here I was, a college student, having a date with a lovely girl to go to an important formal dance. Everything would be perfect tonight.

I rang the bell. Her sister opened the door, asked me in, gave me a cigarette, went through all the usual motions. She mentioned something about my date being ready any minute; then we heard a rustle on the stairs. She stood there for a fraction of a second in a well-practiced pose. Her gown was pink net, and I saw a large rip in the net of the skirt that had been mended with scotch tape. My flowers, sent earlier, were also attached to her bare skin with scotch tape—the edges of the tape glistened in the light.

We arrived at the dance. The orchestra was playing a song that reminded me of another girl at another dance. We said the proper things, danced the proper dances, did everything quite properly.

A few friends of mine glided over to say hello, clumsy introductions were made, names were forgotten. One of her flowers had turned brown around the edges, and I was aware that my trousers were a little too short. She became deeply interested in her fingernails.

We laughed, joked, looked happily into each other's joyful faces. We pressed each other's hand tightly, and I noticed one of the saxophones in the orchestra was badly out of tune.

The taxi stopped in front of her house. We walked to the door, said the usual things. Our lips touched lightly, then parted. The requirements of convention were met. I turned and walked away. The door was shut, the porch light turned out. I turned back, and I could see through the full-length glass in the door that she had kicked off her shoes and was rubbing her feet.

The evening was over.

## The Most Horrible Sight I've Ever Beheld

AUGUST H. KRUEGER

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 2*

I WAS A BIG WHEEL, THAT WARM AUGUST MORNING IN 1942. The circus had come to town the night before, and I, by throwing my chest out and holding my arms tense to make my flimsy biceps protrude a fraction of an inch, had convinced the man that I was strong enough to earn a free ticket to the afternoon performance. The circus was small and shabby, effects of the war, I suppose, but just the same I was an important person, doing an important job. Without me, the show could not go on, at least not quite so soon.

My important job consisted of carrying a pile of stakes here, a box that was too heavy there, and a coil of unmanageable rope some other place. By eleven o'clock I was worn out. Instead of running around looking for something else to do, I was slinking from place to place, hoping I wouldn't be seen. Eventually, I drifted casually over to the gaudily painted trailer, to which the show's one and only elephant was chained. Quite a few of the boys that I knew were standing around there, so I joined them. As we loafed, watching the huge animal maneuvering his trunk with incredible dexterity, a man approached the area. The short, fat stick that he was carrying had a huge, vicious-looking hook on the end of it, and I immediately recognized him as the elephant's trainer. He staggered uncertainly and muttered incoherently as he moved inside the circle that we had formed around the animal. We could readily see that he had taken at least one too many drinks. As he approached the elephant, he immediately assumed a surly, domineering attitude toward it. He seemed to grow in his own dominance until he was not only the trainer, but lord and master over the beast. Soon, for no apparent reason, he decided that the elephant should be standing a little more closely to the huge, steel trailer, so he prodded the creature rather roughly with the blunt end of the stick. When the animal refused to move immediately, the trainer flew into a

drunken rage. He quickly reversed the stick and struck the beast a terrific blow with the hook. The blow opened a deep wound in the elephant's shoulder, causing the blood to run freely.

In an instant, the trainer was encircled by the supple, irresistible strength of the elephant's trunk and thrown, screaming insanely, in a long low arc toward the steel side of the trailer. His screams ended abruptly as he struck the trailer with a bone-crushing thud, and he fell to the ground like a wet towel. His cries brought several of the circus men to the scene. They quickly moved him past the now placid elephant and dragged his broken body away from the area. The blood quickly soaked through the ragged, dirty, white shirt that he was wearing, and glittered in the blazing sun, furnishing a feast for the rapidly gathering flies. He tried to speak once, just before he died, but his words were distorted into an unintelligible gurgle by the blood which gathered in his throat. His eyes rolled upward just before they closed forever, burning an image in my memory that will remain there always.

I was no longer a big wheel as I turned away. I was only a sick kid who had just been introduced to death, and wished we had never met. Clowns and acrobats didn't interest me any more, as I slowly started homeward. I wasn't worried about my ticket, for which I had longed and worked so hard, because I wasn't going to attend the performance anyway.

## Kind Hearts and Coronets

VICKI ROSENBERG

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 7*

IN THE MOTION PICTURES CRIME DOES NOT PAY. NO MATTER how lucrative crime may or may not be in life, crime can never be profitable in the movies. Virtue and honesty must triumph on the screen. The purpose of this is to "perserve" public morals and "prove" that crime does not pay.

This unwritten law is good, but it must allow for some irreverences. When crime is treated comically, when it is ridiculed and turned topsy-turvy, then it is meant to be funny and must be taken that way. Such is the case in *Kind Hearts and Coronets*. Only those people without any sense of humor could object to the tone, manner, and content of this English film. It is a witty, satiric, light-veined, mocking, and nonsensical movie. Murder—in fact, mass murder—is what makes the movie so droll. Of course *Kind Hearts and Coronets* does not defend nor glorify murder; justice is simply delayed in the interest of merriment. The main character (who is also the murderer) is caught in the end, not because of his crimes, but because of an almost irrelevant quirk of fate.



Louis D'Ascoyne is the son of a noblewoman who was disowned because she married beneath her station. Louis, now poor and wretched, has been brought up with the idea that he would one day be Duke of D'Ascoyne. This idea seems perfectly logical to him except for the minor fact that there are eight D'Ascoynes who stand between him and the dukedom. So it is necessary for Louis to dispose of his intervening relatives. In order to achieve his *coronet* he cannot let his *kind heart* stand in his way. Louis plans his homicidal career carefully and carries out his plans with perfect grace, excellent manners, and good humor.

The methods of disposing of the D'Ascoynes and the casualness with which the murders are treated account for the hilarity of the movie. Louis uses some ingenious methods for killing off his relatives. For example, Louis kills dashing young Ascoyne D'Ascoyne by cutting loose the rowboat in which Ascoyne is making love to a girl, so that the pair go crashing over a dam. Another sample of Louis's ingenuity is shown when he sends General Rufus D'Ascoyne a bomb disguised as a pot of caviar. The General receives the bomb as he is dining in his club. He digs his knife into the pot and is promptly blown to bits. Louis kills his suffragette cousin, Lady Agatha D'Ascoyne, as she goes up in a balloon to shower leaflets over London. Louis shoots at her balloon with a bow and arrow, and the poor lady falls to her death in the middle of Berkeley Square.

When he is not busy murdering people and attending funerals, Louis finds time for romance. He makes love to two women, a wild young married woman and a genteel heiress whom he has widowed in the process of his operations.

Alec Guinness portrays all eight of the intervening D'Ascoynes. He plays aristocrats of all ages, many professions, and both sexes. He is superb in all of his roles, and his haughty and subtle manner is wonderfully amusing. He is supported by an excellent cast, all of whom are superior in their parts.

I would definitely recommend *Kind Hearts and Coronets* as a picture that everyone should see. It is very entertaining, very different and I may add, very much better than the typical American slapstick comedy. Its superb acting combined with its clever plot make *Kind Hearts and Coronets* one of the outstanding comedies in many years.

\* \* \*

The props are always set. The small, dark-colored studying desks, the bunk beds that are not always made, the book shelves that are filled with books ranging from hygiene to chemistry to embryology, the chests of drawers with a mirror hanging above each, the lounging chair, the rug and the color of the walls are all props for the play to be presented here. It is a continuous performance without a script, a sponsor or an audience. Here there are joy and sorrow, noise and silence and music and laughing. This is my room; it serves as a home, a place to bring troubles, a place to tell jokes and laugh, a place of comfort and a place of study and learning. This is my room; but it is more than a room—it is a stage with a continuous drama and a never-changing cast.

# Is It a Human Comedy?

GLORYA MAY

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 3*

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS A "HUMAN COMEDY"? A COMEDY is defined as a performance of a light and amusing character, typically having a happy ending. Does this in any way describe the human life? Is not life rather a melancholic affair, with moments of comedy only serving to lighten its enduring oppressiveness? Never in any stage is it a comedy in the true sense of the word.

Consider childhood. One would assume that children would be untroubled, carefree, happy souls. But is this true? Examine the child's life more carefully. Are there not many little happenings, unimportant to adults, that assume the aspects of tragedies in the child's mind? There is certainly nothing less funny to the child than the loss of a little toy which he loved, although to the adult it may seem a trivial matter. And what is less funny than a little boy crying over the death of a beloved puppy, or weeping when a little sister is born because he fears the loss of his parents' love?

As the child advances into adolescence, life becomes even less of a comedy, for adolescence is a period of confusion. It is the time when emotions run the complete gamut from the deepest despair to the most exhilarating elation. True, at times the teenager is characterized as a scatter-brained, carefree, light-hearted individual, but this is rarely the case. Naturally, there are moments of gaiety when life is light and amusing, and these will be cherished and remembered for years to come. But there are also the tragic times, the confusing times, the times when it is difficult to know what to believe and whom to trust and whom to turn to. There are the times when the teenager's faith in human nature—perhaps even in God Himself—trembles and threatens to fail. All this may be because of a matter which appears small and even amusing to an adult, but which is tragic and tremendously important to the adolescent concerned.

Although the younger generation may amuse the adults and give them a chance to feel superior, the adult's life can hardly be considered a comedy. Certainly, little is light and amusing about managing a household and making ends meet. Of course, here too there are the highpoints, the joys of a vacation trip or the fun of watching a child at play. Yet surrounding these pinpoints of lightness are the humdrum, everyday routines and the worries, responsibilities, and trials that go along with being a mature person—the bills, the relatives, the children, and the measles.

Finally, old age can hardly be considered a period of comedy. There is little amusement in the oldster's life, especially in the light of present-day social conditions. At sixty-five, the worker must often retire to a life wherein he feels useless, helpless, and unwanted. Because of insufficient old-age benefits,



the aged often live in poverty and ill health. Even those who grow old in the most pleasant surroundings hardly act the roles of players in a comedy. Life for the aged is rather a series of nostalgic flashbacks and melancholy memories, for the aged live in reverie.

So the two words—human and comedy—do not really combine logically. Since the beginning of time, man has made his life anything but a comedy, anything but a light and amusing performance with a typically happy ending. Life is instead a complex drama, a series of incidents building up one upon the other to a final climax, death. For some short period, perhaps, life could be called a farce, but never a human comedy.

\* \* \*

The field was dark and murky. All the fighters and bombers had come back except one. *The Ace of Spades* was overdue. When the ship gets back, it will have completed seven missions over enemy territory. The control tower said that the ceiling was zero and that it was not expected to lift for another three hours.

Twelve thousand feet up, *The Ace of Spades* droned steadily on. All the crew had bailed out when the right engine exploded. Now all that was left of the engine was a dark cavity. The pilot had every intention of following his crew, but a Japanese fighter plane changed his mind. The crippled bomber was in no condition to put up a fight.

Over the pilot's head an insistent voice came out of a little box. Sitting on the corner of the little box was a lone fly with his head cocked listening to every word. Then the little box was silent. The fly had to wake the sleeping pilot. The fly flew down past the gas gauge which read empty, and landed on the pilot's nose. After waltzing up and down the pilot's nose several times, he grew tired of this seemingly unrewarding task and decided to investigate the crimson pool on the floor directly below the pilot's head.

The fly landed right in the middle of the pool and thought to himself that some housewife had left the cover off a jar of jam. The fly flew up and landed on a piece of paper with all sorts of zig-zag lines on it. It was a map of the island showing the field. As the fly strutted across "Headquarters" he left microscopic red footprints on the paper. He didn't like the jam. It was warm and tasted strange.

The fly had enough of this and he wanted to go home. He started to fly toward a bullet-shattered window in an effort to escape this dull place, when the Pacific Ocean stopped him. The bomber rapidly sank to the sand bar thirty feet below the surface of the water. Now the cabin was almost full and the fly had all he could do to keep flying. When he would land on the handle of some instrument the water would come up and sweep him off. Now there was no place to land and the fly was getting tired. Finally the fly fell into the water and sank out of sight. The ocean was very still.

The plane stopped rolling and pitching and settled down. The pilot's straight hair was now wavy as the motion of the water caressed it back and forth. A small brightly-colored fish darted in through a broken piece of glass. His eyes were open wide for he had never seen the inside of a bomber before. What a strange place; all these dials and instruments were very confusing. The fish also saw a man with wavy hair trying to swim away, but the belt around his waist would not let him go. The fish spied his supper and the fly was no more.

Up thirty feet and inland forty-seven miles, the ground crew anxiously strained their ears for some sign of the overdue plane. One hour passed, then two, then three. During the fourth hour, the radio man brought a message to the company commander. It said, "One of our planes is missing."

—JAMES T. WALSH, 101



## "Can-Do"

JOSEPH MARRS

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 8*

THE SEA BEES, AN ACCEPTED NICKNAME ATTACHED TO the Navy's Construction Battalions, were born on December 20, 1941.

It is interesting to note exactly how the Sea Bees were formed, and why. Up until the disaster at Pearl Harbor, the Navy employed civilian tradesmen and laborers to build and maintain their various outposts in the Pacific. These journeymen, skilled as they were in their individual trades, could not cope with a jammed carbine or a Jap on the beach.

It must have been frustrating to a man who could so deftly lift a blade on a "Cat" to be unable to raise a rifle to his shoulder. Could these men be blamed for not being trained in the various facets of war? Hardly! As a result, the Navy lost island after island and could no longer recruit civilians to build up and defend the islands that remained. Then, the idea arose of recruiting skilled tradesmen and training them to build and fight in units. Hence, construction battalions and the birth of the Sea Bees.

Unfortunately, all the islands that the United States held in the Pacific were lost before the first construction battalions were deployed. Since the Japanese struck faster and harder than anyone deemed possible, the Sea Bees would be of little use unless they could be trained as Marines, in the aggressive style that had made the "Corps" famous. Thus, at their home in Port Hueneme, California, the Sea Bees were trained in the offensive aspects of combat.

After the footings were poured at Port Hueneme, the typical construction battalions were sent to the Sea Bees' advance depot in Honolulu, where they were equipped and later joined by coordinating Marine combat troops. From Honolulu, the coordinated Sea Bee and Marine units set out to recover and rebuild the Japanese held islands. Upon invasion of an island, the Sea Bees were to support the Marines in taking the beach and maintaining a foothold on the island. Then the Sea Bees would fall back to build barracks, docks, airstrips, or whatever was needed.

Of course, this plot couldn't always be followed—often the "Yanks" met bitter Japanese resistance and the "Bees" weren't allowed to build immediately. At other times the Marines found construction going on when they arrived on the scene. The Sea Bees were not to be slighted. They were as good or better than any other fighting unit in the Pacific, and in building, the "Bees" were second to no other force. The Sea Bees were called on to build docks where docks could not be built. They built airstrips in monsoon rains and during air raids. They built air strips on coral beaches, and sometimes the "Bees" turned out airfields overnight. It can easily be seen how the Sea Bees

acquired their "Can-Do" slogan. It was often said that if a job couldn't be done the Sea Bees would do it.

Today, the Sea Bees are not as dramatic as in World War II. Only a handful of Sea Bees are in Korea faithfully maintaining an air strip for a Marine Air Wing. At Cubi Point on Bataan, Sea Bees are found moving twenty-five thousand cubic yards of volcanic earth a day, around the clock. In the Mariannas on the island of Eniwetok, Sea Bees are seen doing their part in the testing of the "H" bomb. On every island in the Pacific where the Navy is found, the Sea Bees will be found maintaining and improving the installations and doing their job, whatever it may be, quickly and expertly.

"We're the Sea Bees of the Navy. We'll fight and we will build. We'll build our way to victory . . ." This is the beginning of the Sea Bee Song. I know that as these men go about their jobs today, they sing this song—if not aloud—at least in their hearts, as they did in World War II—fighting and building their way to victory.

\* \* \*

Walk down some lonely street in a midwestern college town when the night is cold and still and late. If it is very late, say after girls' curfew, you will see lights burning in students' rooms, and chances are that you will glimpse a student or two at his window looking out at the night, at you, at nothing. Notice, providing it is a week night, that the evening is without sound—this is the little-known facet of college life, the quiet hours.

There are, of course, the regular quiet hours; every house has them. They may run from 1:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon, and from 7:00 to 10:00 in the evening. Everyone is familiar with these quiet hours. But the real quiet hours, the seldom-heard-of quiet hours, are those between midnight and about two in the morning. At these early hours of the day, every student is acting the part of himself best. For usually the student and his roommate are alone, and regardless of what they may be doing, they will not be employing the pretenses, the bravados, the affected niceties of the day or of the social evenings. They will be themselves.

Some people do their studies during these morning hours, and do them religiously. Others try to study but have little success and end up by musing over the day's events or last Saturday's date. Some students' thoughts drift away into young dreams of today and of tomorrow; others who may not be doing so well ponder bitterly, sadly over their failures. These hours hold great joys, real sorrows, and many, many dreams. They are good hours. Hours to remember.

—RALPH JALESO, 102